

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0767
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BANGKOK 26264

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, OVIP, VM, TH
SUBJ: SRV VISIT TO THAILAND: THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE

REF: A. BANGKOK 24596 (NOTAL), B. BANGKOK 26002 (NOTAL),
C. BANGKOK 26129

1. SUMMARY: JOINT COMMUNIQUE CONCLUDING SEPT 6-10 VISIT
TO THAILAND BY SRV PREMIER PHAM VAN DONG INCLUDES COMMIT-
MENTS TO PROMOTE TRADE, FISHERY, AND POSTAL/TELECOMMUNI-
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CATIONS RELATIONS. COMMUNIQUE ALSO ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT
TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS IN OCTOBER ON REPATRIATION OF
FRENCH INDOCHINA-ERA REFUGEES. THAILAND REITERATED SUP-
PORT FOR THE ASEAN ZONE OF PEACE WITHOUT DIRECT REFER-
ENCE TO VIETNAM'S PROPOSAL. DONG ALSO COMMITTED VIETNA-
MESE NOT RPT NOT TO INTERFERE IN THAILAND'S INTERNAL
AFFAIRS, A COMMITMENT PM KRIANGSAK HERALDED AS A PROMISE

NOT TO SUPPORT THE THAI INSURGENCY. THAIS EVIDENTLY DECLINED TO SIGN A TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION AND, AS THAIS INTENDED, NO MENTION WAS MADE OF THIRD COUNTRIES, I.E. KAMPUCHEA AND THE PRC. THAIS OFFERED, AND VIETNAMESE ACCEPTED, 100 MILLION BAHT (5 MILLION US DOLLARS) IN CREDITS TO HANOI. BOTH LEADERS HAD KIND WORDS PUBLICLY FOR EACH OTHER. END SUMMARY.

1. WHILE FONMIN UPPADIT OUTLINED IN HIS SEPT 7 PRESS CONFERENCE (REF B) THE AREAS OF AGREEMENT REACHED IN TWO DAYS OF TALKS WITH VISITING SRV PREMIER PHAM VAN DONG, THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE (TEXT IN REF C), SIGNED SEPT 10 BY PREMIER DONG AND PM KRIANGSAK, FORMALLY RECORDED THOSE SAME AGREEMENTS AND SPELLED OUT SRV AND RTG POSITIONS ON SEVERAL FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS. IN ADDITION TO AGREEMENTS TO PROMOTE RELATIVELY UNCONTROVERSIAL TRADE, FISHERY, AND POSTAL/TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONTACTS, THE LEADERS ADDRESSED REPATRIATION OF FRENCH INDOCHINA-ERA VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, A ZONE OF PEACE IN SE ASIA, AND BI-LATERAL RELATIONS, SPECIFICALLY THE QUESTION OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE OTHER. VIETNAMESE APPEARED TO AGREE NOT RPT NOT TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THE THAI INSURGENCY. THAILAND ALSO OFFERED HANOI 100 MILLION BAHT (5 MILLION US DOLLARS) IN CREDITS FOR PURCHASE OF THAI PRODUCTS, AN OFFER THE VIETNAMESE ACCEPTED. PM KRIANGSAK ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE AN INVITATION TO VISIT THE SRV, BUT NO DATE

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WAS SET.

2. ON THREE PREVIOUS OCCASIONS VIETNAMESE LEADERS HAVE RELUCTANTLY AGREED TO SET UP A JOINT COMMISSION TO WORK FOR THE REPATRIATION OF FRENCH INDOCHINA-ERA REFUGEES. WITH DONG, A DATE, OCTOBER 16, WAS FINALLY SET TO BEGIN THIS EFFORT. THE THAIS HAD HOPED FOR INCLUSION OF "VOLUNTARY" REPATRIATION IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE COMMUNIQUE, BUT NEVERTHELESS APPEAR PLEASED TO BE ABLE TO POINT TO SOME PROGRESS IN THIS POLITICALLY SENSITIVE AREA. DONG ALSO DID NOT RPT NOT COMMIT THE SRV TO ACCEPT "ALL" THE 40,000-50,000 "OLD" VIETNAMESE REFUGEES BELIEVED TO RESIDE IN THAILAND. BOTH SIDES ARE AWARE THAT FEW VIETNAMESE NOW WISH TO BE REPATRIATED, AND REAL PROGRESS IN THIS AREA IS LIKELY TO BE EXTREMELY SLOW. THE RTG STILL HAS WRITTEN PLEDGES, TEN YEARS OLD, FROM MANY OF THE "OLD" VIETNAMESE REFUGEES STATING THAT THEY WISH TO BE REPATRIATED. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THAT THE THAIS WOULD NOT RPT NOT RESORT TO BROAD, INVOLUNTARY REPATRIATION, A POINT ON WHICH THEY HAVE REASSURED US.

3. ON THE VIETNAMESE "ZONE OF PEACE, INDEPENDENCE AND NEUTRALITY," WHICH THE VIETNAMESE AND DONG PERSONALLY

EXERTED STRONG PRESSURE ON THE THAIS TO ACCEPT, THE THAIS REMAINED FIRM IN THEIR REFUSAL TO ENDORSE THE VIETNAMESE CONCEPT. THE COMMUNIQUE CONTAINS BROAD LANGUAGE INCLUDING ALL THE CONCEPTS IN THE ASEAN PROPOSAL, THE VIETNAMESE PROPOSAL, PLUS OTHER WORTHY CONCEPTS. COMMUNIQUE STATED THAT "THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS EXPRESSED THEIR RESPECTIVE VIEWS ON THE DESIRABILITY OF SE ASIA BEING AN AREA OF PEACE, INDEPENDENCE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY, AS WELL AS OF STABILITY AND PROSPERITY." INCORPORATING KRIANGSAK'S COMMITMENT TO HIS ASEAN ALLIES, THE COMMUNIQUE GOES ON TO STATE THAT THE "THAI PRIME MINISTER REITERATED

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THAILAND'S COMMITMENT TO WORK TOWARD THE REALIZATION OF THE ASEAN CONCEPT OF THE ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM, AND NEUTRALITY." ASKED AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE LATER SEPT 10 (TEXT BY SEPTTEL) WHY THE VIETNAMESE PREFERRED

"INDEPENDENCE" TO "FREEDOM" IN THE VIETNAMESE PROPOSAL, DONG SAID, "WE LIKE BOTH EQUALLY. THERE'S NOTHING MORE VALUABLE THAN INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM. THE VIETNAMESE CONSIDER THESE MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING ELSE."

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4. REGARDING BI-LATERAL RELATIONS, THE COMMUNIQUE STATES THAT BOTH SIDES WOULD, "CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THEIR BI-LATERAL RELATIONS BY RESPECTING THE INDEPENDENCE, SOVEREIGNTY, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND THE RIGHT OF EACH COUNTRY TO DETERMINE ITS OWN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL SYSTEM, REFRAINING FROM INTERFERING IN EACH OTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS; FROM CARRYING OUT SUBVERSION, DIRECT OR INDIRECT AGAINST EACH OTHER AND FROM USING FORCE OR THREATENING THE USE OF FORCE AGAINST EACH OTHER...ETC."

5. DONG STRESSED THIS POINT IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE. COMMENTING ON THE COMMITMENT, DONG SAID, "WE WILL RESPECT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THAILAND AND WILL AVOID ANYTHING THAT WILL CAUSE MISUNDERSTANDING." HE SAID THAT HE HAD MADE THAT PLEDGE TO PM KRIANGSAK AND REITERATED IT PUBLICLY, ADDING, "WE HAVE WON OUR INDEPENDENCE IN A COSTLY BATTLE, AND THERE IS NOTHING MORE DEAR TO US THAN OUR INDEPENDENCE. THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE VALUE OUR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE SHOWS THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE RESPECT YOUR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE."

6. THAIS LED BY PM KRIANGSAK HAVE HERALDED THIS COMMITMENT FROM DONG AS A VIETNAMESE COMMITMENT NOT TO SUPPORT THE THAI INSURGENCY. KRIANGSAK TOLD THE PRESS THAT HE REGARDED THIS AS "THE MOST FRUITFUL PART OF DONG'S VISIT," AND CLAIMED (WE BELIEVE CORRECTLY) THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME EVER FOR THE SRV TO MAKE SUCH A PROMISE. FROM OUR STANDPOINT, IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER HANOI WILL, LIKE PEKING, MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND PARTY SUPPORT TO THE THAI INSURGENCY. PEKING HAS, OF COURSE, CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPLICITLY TOLD THE THAIS THAT THE CCP WILL CONTINUE SOME LEVEL OF FRATERNAL SUPPORT FOR THE CPT, DESPITE IMPROVING STATE TO STATE TO RELATIONS. THAIS APPEAR

TO REGARD DONG'S COMMITMENT AS BEING INCLUSIVE OF
GOVERNMENTAL AND PARTY AFFAIRS.

7. NOT RPT NOT MENTIONED IN THE COMMUNIQUE ARE TWO
POINTS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE VIETNAMESE. BECAUSE OF
VIETNAM'S CONFLICTS WITH KAMPUCHEA AND PEKING, THE
THAIS INSISTED THAT THERE BE NO REFERENCE TO THIRD
COUNTRIES. THERE WERE NONE. DESPITE STRONG PRESSURE,
THAIS ALSO REFUSED TO CONCLUDE A TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP
AND COOPERATION, SINCE SUCH AN AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE
IMPLICATIONS FOR THAILAND'S RELATIONS WITH THE OTHER
ASEAN STATES, AS WELL AS THE PRC AND KAMPUCHEA. IN
HIS PRESS CONFERENCE, ADDRESSING THIS POINT, DONG SAID,
"IT IS SATISFACTORY (THAT THE TREATY WAS NOT CONCLUDED).
WE HAVE TO DO EVERYTHING STEP BY STEP."

8. FINALLY, THE COMMUNIQUE NOTED, NEAR THE BEGINNING,
THAT THE "TALKS TOOK PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF COR-
DIALITY, FRIENDSHIP, AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING."
ALTHOUGH WE KNOW THAT DONG AND HIS LIEUTENANTS
PRESSED THE THAIS HARD ON SENSITIVE ISSUES, THE
PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS OF THE VISIT WERE CHARACTERIZED
BY WARMTH AND POSITIVE SENTIMENT. KRIANGSAK UNDER-
TOOK THE UNUSUAL STEP OF ACCOMPANYING DONG TO SOUTH-
ERN THAILAND TO CALL ON THE KING. KRIANGSAK ALSO
TOLD THE PRESS THAT HE WAS TOUCHED BY HIS IMPRESSION
THAT PREMIER DONG WAS ON THE VERGE OF TEARS WHEN HE
VISITED THE TEMPLE OF THE EMERALD BUDDHA, LIGHTED
JOSS STICKS, AND PRAYED WITH THE MONKS. KRIANGSAK
REFERRED TO THE 72 YEAR OLD DONG AS "HIS OLDER
BROTHER." BOTH HAD COMPLIMENTARY WORDS TO SAY ABOUT
THE OTHER PUBLICLY.

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9. FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS WITH RTG OFFICIALS AND ASEAN

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EMBASSIES WHO ARE BEING BRIEFED TODAY, WE WILL ASSESS
THE VISIT FURTHER. AT THIS POINT, WE BELIEVE THAT
THE COMMUNIQUE REPRESENTS SATISFACTORY STEPS FORWARD
FOR BOTH NATIONS IN THEIR BI-LATERAL RELATIONS.
THAI TENACITY REGARDING PRINCIPLES AND ISSUES OF
GREAT IMPORTANCE TO BANGKOK SHOULD NOT ONLY IMPROVE
BANGKOK'S STANDING DOMESTICALLY AND WITH ITS ASEAN
NEIGHBORS, BUT ALSO HAS PROBABLY PUT THAILAND ON A
BETTER FOOTING WITH THE VIETNAMESE THEMSELVES.
DESPITE THEIR NERVOUSNESS ABOUT VARIOUS ASPECTS OF
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THE VISIT, IT APPEARS THAT THE THAIS HAVE ACQUITTED
THEMSELVES CREDITABLY IN DELICATE CIRCUMSTANCES.
THE VIETNAMESE HAVE ALSO GAINED IN THE ECONOMIC AREA
AND IN IMPROVING THEIR IMAGE AS A PEACEFUL NEIGHBOR.
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